

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 18697 301302Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 VO-05 CA-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7025

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

INFO UMISSION GENEVA 3059

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

INS/CO WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES; AMERICAN-OWNED VESSEL, THE STYX,
RESCUES 43 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REF: (A) BANGKOK 18168 (B) STATE 161499 (C) STATE 162345

1. REF A REPORTED THE ARRIVAL OF THE STYX. THE UNHCR AND
THE EMBASSY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS
WITH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR REFUGEE OFFICIALS ABOUT
GUARANTEES FOR THE DEPARTURE FOR RESELTMENT ABROAD OF

REFUGEES THAT THE STYX PICKED UP. RTG PRACTICE IS TO
SET AN EARLY DEADLINE, USUALLY NO MORE THAN TWO WEEKS,
FOR THE DEPARTURE OF REFUGEES BROUGHT TO THAILAND ON
FOREIGN-OWNED VESSELS.

2. THE REFUGEES HAVE THEREFORE BEEN HOVERING FOR SIX
DAYS, WITHOUT PERMISSION TO DISEMBARK, ON THE SURFACE OF
THIS 40-FOOT SAILBOAT. THE RTG OPERATIONAL OFFICIALS
CONCERNED SUGGESTED AT ONE POINT THAT THE STYX SAIL ON TO
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ITS NEXT PORT OF CALL WITH THE REFUGEES ABOARD.
KEEPING IN MIND THE GUIDANCE IN REF B, WE FINALLY
WORKED OUT A FORMULA JUNE 30 WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERI-
OR. WE SAID IN WRITING "WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO
SEE THAT THEY LEAVE THAILAND BY 31 AUGUST 1978."
RTG AUTHORITIES WERE EXTREMELY UPSET ABOUT SUCH A LONG
TIME DELAY. BUT THEY HAVE APPARENTLY PERMITTED THE REFUGEES

TO DISEMBARK, AND MOVE TO THE LAEMSING CAMP.

3. OF THE 43 REFUGEES, 7 ARE LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR FRANCE AND 6 FOR AUSTRALIA. THE REMAINING 30 ARE APPARENTLY OURS. WE SENT IN VISA FALCONS ON THEM JUNE 29. WE ASSIGNED CASE NUMBERS TO THE 30 AND FORWARDED BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON THEM TO ACVA JUNE 30, REQUESTING EXPEDITIOUS SPONSORSHIP.

4. GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE TIMING OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION (REF C), WE HAVE RESERVATIONS IN THIS CASE ABOUT THE ABILITY TO DRAW ON THE 1500 NUMBERS RESERVED FOR REFUGEES THAT AMERICAN VESSELS RESCUE. WE PROPOSE INSTEAD TO USE RECOUPED IPP-77 AND 78 BOAT CASE NUMBERS TO COVER THEM. WE CURRENTLY HAVE ENOUGH ON HAND TO DO SO. INS OFFICERS WILL BE IN THAILAND APPROXIMATELY JULY 8 TO CONSIDER THEIR CASES.
O'DONOHUE

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